

STROLL 5 WHITWORTH SQUARE AND ST BARTHOLOMEW'S

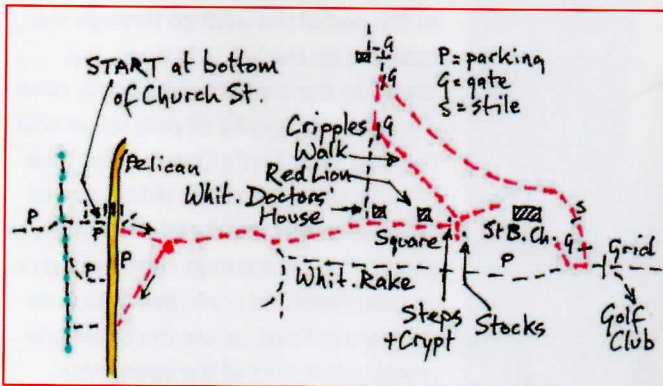
START Bottom of Church Street

If you're parking a car, there are 4 small car parks nearby –

- Market Street, opposite Post Office – disc parking
- Top of Hall Street, next to café (very small)
- Further down Hall Street, next to Hall Fold Church (not Sundays, please)
- First left off Hall Street, then narrow left turn at bottom of ramp, and through gap in wall – return to Market Street on foot via snicket at top

DISTANCE Medium BUS STOP Hall Street

NATURE OF WALK The historical heart of Whitworth. *Rather uppish!*



If necessary, cross Market Street via the pelican crossing. Turn into Church Street, walk up to

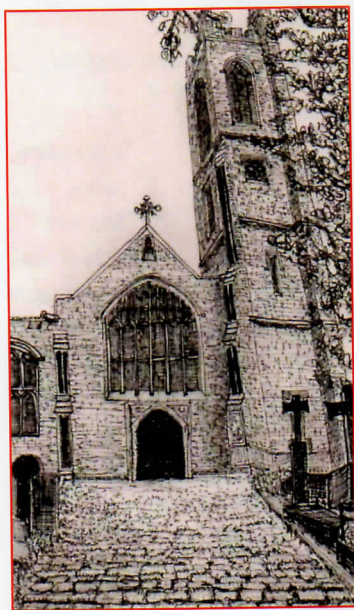
the mini-roundabout and spot the three buildings which have date-stones hinting at the antiquity of this part of the village. This road used to begin the main route to Rochdale, before the turnpike (main road) was built.

At the roundabout keep going up. Then stay left of the narrow gable end ...and breathe in the history. Several houses bear blue badges – worth a read. The most famous is the one on the left, between the lane and the pub. This was the house, and surgery, of the famous Whitworth Doctors.

John Taylor, ex-blacksmith and horse doctor, set up his practice in 1764. He used his bone-setting skills on both humans and horses, but the Taylors branched out into herbal medicine, created embrocations and a caustic compound called 'Keen', and succeeded with so many patients that orthodox physicians had failed to cure that they became nationally famous. [Whitworth Heritage Museum has much more on the Doctors – 07434703972 for opening times]

Next up is the *Red Lion*...later, maybe? For now, go up the set of steps to the vault of the Taylor family. To the right, inside the graveyard gates, is a set of stocks. (Actually, later research suggests that these were never used officially, Whitworth not having a court able to mete out such a sentence.)

Back past the top of the steps, you can go right, up through the graveyard to the church, which looms impressively from here – but this path can be slippery, so take care; or straight ahead on the flat flagstone path known as the Cripples Walk, used by patients for recuperative post-op exercise.



St Bart's by Peter Williams. Get closer for gargoyles!

At the end of the path go through the gate and up the hill. It's steep, but short. At the top turn right again, onto a grassy path, gently sloping up around the back of St Bart's Church. The view through the trees of the oldest part of Whitworth is tranquil and evocatively idyllic. The path swings right through a squeeze-stile and a wooden gate onto Whitworth Rake, below the cattle grid marking the start of the open moor. Turn down and then right again, towards the church and its looming gargoyles – the spookiest are on the shady north

side of the church. Be wary about descending the setted path through the graveyard. The safer alternative route to the Square or your transport is down the Rake. JF

